

Applicant : John T. Buckley et al.  
For : PINTLE MOUNT  
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In the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0003] with the following amended paragraph.

[0003] While pintle hooks such as those shown in Figs. 1A and 1B have been attached to larger trucks, agricultural equipment, and other specially manufactured vehicles, it has been proposed to attach such pintle hooks to light trucks, vans, and other vehicles that have a conventional rectangular or square receiver of the type which more commonly would receive a ball mount. Accordingly, pintle mounts such as that shown in Fig. 2 have been constructed to allow pintle hooks to be mounted to vehicles utilizing their conventional receivers. Specifically, the conventional pintle mount includes a shank 30 made of a solid bar having a square or rectangular ~~cross section~~ cross section with its outer width and height configured to fit within the conventional receiver of smaller vehicles. The shank 30 includes a through-hole 32, which aligns with similar holes in the receiver for receipt of a pin (not shown), which holds the mount in place within the vehicle's receiver. The opposite end of shank 30 from the vehicle is welded or otherwise secured to a base plate 34 having a plurality of apertures 36 formed therein. The apertures 36 may thus be aligned with apertures 24 of a pintle hook and bolts may be inserted therethrough so as to secure the pintle hook on the mount at a height selected by selection of the appropriate apertures 36 in the pintle mount. A gusset 38 may also be welded to both base plate 34 and shank 30 for further mechanical support.

Please replace paragraph [0007] with the following amended paragraph.

[0007] The present invention provides a draw bar and universal mount for a trailer hitch ~~including,~~ including a base plate comprising a first section, a second section and at least two rows of apertures. The draw bar and universal mount also includes a shank having a first portion, a second portion and a central portion, wherein the central portion connects the first portion and the second portion. The shank also includes at least one opening and further includes one end disposed on the base plate. Additionally, the base plate and shank are fabricated from an integral, continuous piece of material.

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Please replace paragraph [0035] with the following amended paragraph.

[0035] As illustrated in Figs. 3A-3D, the first embodiment of the pintle mount of the present invention is shown and comprises a shank 130 in the form of an I-beam, a base plate 132, and a second strengthening member 134 all integrally formed as a one-piece casting. Second strengthening member 134 advantageously is molded in and integrally formed with shank 130 and base plate 132 so as to gently transfer the loads to the shank without causing any stress risers- rise in shank 130. An optional first strengthening member 136 may also be integrally formed to extend from the top of the I-beam shank 130 to the upper portion of base plate 132. By providing first strengthening member 136, the upper portion of base mounting plate 132 is more strongly supported and secured to shank 130.

Please amend paragraph [0038] with the following amended paragraph.

[0038] To facilitate the provision of a through-hole 140 in shank 130, the portion of shank 130 in the vicinity of through-hole 140 is preferably formed to have a rectangular or square ~~cross-section-~~ cross section serving as a crossover gusset 142 that provides sufficient strength to that portion of the shank 130. This crossover gusset 142 additionally improves the strength and rigidity of the shank 130 as a whole.

Please amend paragraph [0042] with the following amended paragraph.

[0042] As shown in Figs. 5A, 5D, and 5E, second strengthening member 134 may be configured to have a wider rim or edge 152 that provides a cross-sectional T-shape. This allows the ~~lower gusset-~~ second strengthening member 134 to be made somewhat thinner and thus the weight of the pintle mount is decreased while the strength is maintained or increased by the presence of rim 152. Additionally, a hole 154 may be provided through second strengthening member 134 to further decrease the weight without sacrificing its strength. Second strengthening member 134 and optionally first strengthening member 136 may also be flared so as to have an increased width at its upper and lower extent where it joins shank 130 and base plate 132. These flares 158 may be provided throughout the thickness of the gusset

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or may be provided just in the portion of rim 152. The flares improve the strength performance of the pintle mount while also reducing stresses due to heavy loads.